

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**REMEMBER TO PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESSES**

**ORLANDO** - The Florida Department of Health in Orange and Seminole Counties are emphasizing precaution against mosquito-borne illnesses because of recent rains and outdoor activities for 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebrations. This Independence Day is a good time to remind families to take precautions, since many fireworks displays occur in the evening when mosquitoes are active. Throughout the year, the health departments work with local Mosquito Control divisions, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and state universities, to monitor for the presence of illnesses carried by mosquitoes.

"It is important for people to be aware that standing water is a breeding ground for mosquitoes and can lead to an increase in the insects. There are simple measures to reduce the chances of contracting a mosquito-borne illness," said Dr. Kevin M. Sherin, Director of the Department of Health in Orange County.

"Remembering simple steps such as covering your skin with clothing or repellent with DEET can protect you from serious illness," said Dr. Swannie Jett, Health Officer of the Department of Health in Seminole County.

Orange County residents and visitors should remain diligent in protecting themselves from mosquito bites by practicing: **Drain and Cover**.

**Drain standing water to stop mosquitoes from multiplying.**

- **DISCARD:** Old tires, drums, bottles, cans, pots and pans, broken appliances and other items that aren't being used.
- **EMPTY** and **CLEAN:** Birdbaths and pet's water bowls at least once or twice a week.
- **PROTECT:** Boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that don't accumulate water.
- **MAINTAIN:** The water balance (pool chemistry) of swimming pools. Empty plastic swimming pools when not in use.

**Cover your skin with clothing and use mosquito repellent.**

- **CLOTHING:** If you must be outside when mosquitoes are active, cover up. Wear shoes, socks, long pants, and long sleeves.
- **REPELLENT:** Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing. Always use repellents according to the label. Repellents with DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and IR3535 are effective. Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than 2 months.

**Cover doors and windows with screens to keep mosquitoes out.**

- Keep mosquitoes out of your house. Repair broken screens on windows, doors, porches, and patios.

Symptoms of mosquito-borne illnesses may include headache, fever, fatigue, dizziness, weakness, and confusion.

Mosquitoes usually bite at dusk and dawn, but may bite at any time of day. The mosquitoes that carry Dengue fever can bite during the day as well – especially indoors, in shady areas, or when the weather is cloudy.

Physicians should contact their county health department if they suspect an individual may have a mosquito-borne illness. Department of Health (DOH) laboratories provide testing services for physicians treating patients with clinical signs of mosquito-borne illnesses.

For more information on mosquito-borne disease visit the Department of Health Environmental Health website at [www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/arboviral/index.html](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/arboviral/index.html).

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